

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

**BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND FISHERIES AND
WILDLIFE**

In Support of L.D. 438

**“An Act to Clarify and Amend the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
Licensing Laws”**

SPONSORED BY: Representative Wood of Greene

DATE OF HEARING: April 19, 2023

Good afternoon Senator LaFountain, Representative Landry and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Tim Peabody, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, in support of **L.D. 438**. This bill makes the following changes to the laws governing licensing and registration by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

(Sections 1 – 7) of this bill provides that all members of the Advisory Board for the Licensing of Guides (except state employees) are entitled to receive compensation. It increases the daily rate of compensation for examiners of the Advisory Board for the Licensing of Guides and the Advisory Board for the Licensing of Taxidermists from \$50 per day to \$150 per day plus per diem. These examiners are often required to work on a daily schedule not simply on a quarterly meeting or infrequent volunteer-type basis. The department has found it increasingly difficult to keep well-trained, professional examiners interested in serving at a rate of \$50/day so they aren't willing to take a day off from guiding or working on their taxidermy business when they will make substantially less money.

After the bill was printed, we noted a cross reference error in (Section 7). The reference to “Section 12855, subsection 6” should be replaced with a reference to “section 12953” (which applies to taxidermist). We would respectfully ask that an amendment to this section be made.

(Section 8) of the bill increases the fee for a pheasant hunting permit from \$18 to \$29 and increases the amount that is retained by the authorized IFW agent from \$1 to \$2. The department received a request from the Windham Rod and Gun Club to propose a fee increase to the pheasant hunting stamp. The concept of a pheasant stamp fee increase is to ensure an effective program and enhance the recreational opportunity it provides. The fee goes into a dedicated account to purchase, raise and release pheasant for hunting in York and Cumberland Counties. It's a model program of the Department working with partners to provide a valuable recreational opportunity for all ages of the sporting public. If we're able to continue the program as it currently exists, we need to keep pace with costs, and it's been more than a

decade since the last increase. The proposed fee is reasonable and supported by our partners, the Windham Rod and Gun Club.

(Sections 9) removes the provision of law that allows a guide applicant to take a 2nd test for free. It is estimated that nearly half of the tests given are to those who failed the first time and are taking it again for free. This change may incentivize applicants to do better the first time they take the test. It also proposes to increase the cost of the guide application fee from \$100 to \$125 to offset the cost of paying examiners to conduct in-person examinations.

(Section 10) corrects a cross reference related to the guide oral examination that resulted from the changes in Sections 1-7 of this bill (guide compensation).

(Section 11-12) of the bill proposes and clarifies an increase to the cost of the taxidermist application fee from \$50 to \$125 to offset the cost of paying examiners to conduct in-person examinations and it also clarifies that the taxidermist application fee applies to examinations for a general classification in addition to other classifications for first time applicants.

(Section 13) of the bill brings consistency between ATV and snowmobile law by clarifying that the owner of a snowmobile is not required to register it if it is operated on land that they live on or land that they own or lease. This same change was made to the registration requirements for an owner of an ATV [PLc. 215](#) that went into effect during 2021, this makes the law consistent for snowmobiles.

(Section 14) implements the pheasant hunting stamp fee increase in section (8) of this bill on January 1, 2024.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.